

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

<b>Applicant(s):</b>	Kazunori Taniguchi, et al.	<b>Examiner:</b>	Unassigned
<b>Serial No:</b>	To be assigned	<b>Art Unit:</b>	Unassigned
<b>Filed:</b>	Herewith	<b>Docket:</b>	17469
<b>For:</b>	SURGICAL INSTRUMENT	<b>Dated:</b>	February 23, 2004

Mail Stop Patent Application  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

Sir:

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.97 and 1.98, it is requested that the following references, which are also listed on the attached Form PTO-1449, be made of record in the above-identified case.

1. U.S. Patent No. 5,383,888, dated January 24, 1995, issued to Zvenyatsky et al.;
2. U.S. Patent No. 5,275,608, dated January 4, 1994, issued to Forman et al.;
3. U.S. Patent No. 5,330,502, dated July 19, 1994, issued to Hassler et al.; and
4. U.S. Patent No. 5,549,637, dated August 27, 196, issued to Crainich.

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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING BY "EXPRESS MAIL"**

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**Date of Deposit: February 23, 2004**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. § 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, Mail Stop Patent Application. P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 2313-1450.

Dated: February 23, 2004

  
Thomas Spinelli

The above-cited references are not being submitted herewith, as copies of U.S. patents are no longer required per the waiver of 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(a)(2)(i) in effect as of June 30, 2003. The above-cited references have been described in the specification.

Inasmuch as this Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted in accordance with the schedule set out in 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b), no statement or fee is required.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas Spinelli

Registration No.: 39,533

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TS:cm

<b>INFORMATION DISCLOSURE CITATION</b> <i>(Use several sheets if necessary)</i>	Docket Number (Optional) <b>17469</b>	Application Number <b>To be assigned</b>
	Applicant(s) <b>Kazunori Taniguchi, et al.</b>	
	Filing Date <b>Herewith</b>	Group Art Unit <b>Unassigned</b>

**U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

*EXAMINER INITIAL	REF	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	FILING DATE IF APPROPRIATE
		5,383,888	1/24/1995	Zvenyatsky et al.			
		5,275,608	1/4/1994	Forman et al.			
		5,330,502	7/19/1994	Hassler et al.			
		5,549,637	8/27/1996	Crainich			

**FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS**

	REF	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	Translation	
							YES	NO

**OTHER DOCUMENTS** *(Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.)*


EXAMINER	DATE CONSIDERED
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EXAMINER: Initial if citation considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP Section 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

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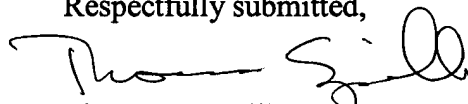
Mail Stop Patent Application  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**CLAIM OF PRIORITY**

Sir:

Applicants in the above-identified application hereby claim the right of priority in connection with Title 35 U.S.C. § 119 and in support thereof, herewith submit a certified copy of Japanese Patent Application No. 2003-051849 (JP2003-051849) filed February 27, 2003; 2003-051850 (JP2003-051850) filed February 27, 2003 and 2003-051851 (JP2003-051851) filed February 27, 2003.

Respectfully submitted,



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